

Meeting Minutes
Andover Commission on Disability
September 24, 2014

Since the meeting was not posted on time, tonight's meeting could not include member votes. Any necessary votes will take place at next month's meeting. The meeting was convened on Wednesday, September 24, 2014 at 6:34 p.m. in the Memorial Hall Library, Activity room, Lower Level.

Present: Maddy St. Amand (Acting Chair), Julie Pike, Jennifer Samaras, Bernadette Lionetta, Justin Coppola Jr., Stephen Surette, Donna Gorzela.

Also Present: Former Chair Justin Coppola Sr.

Minutes: Julie made a motion to accept the August 27, 2014 minutes and Bernadette seconded.

Old Business – Updates

- ❖ **Spot checks** —Steve gave an update reporting that new signs and handicap ramps previously mentioned are still being worked on, and the Shawsheen Plaza curb cut at the intersection will be ripped out and re-cut. Justin Sr. and Jr. mentioned that Kenilworth street (off route 28) has neither a curb cut nor a cross-walk which Steve noted for review.

- ❖ **Bancroft School site review** - Maddy opened the meeting by thanking Justin Sr. for overseeing the Bancroft site tours and ADA inspections for ACOD. Justin Sr. then walked ACOD through the written summary dated September 22, 2014, which he distributed to members for review. He stressed the importance of making sure all the identified access issues are rectified before the \$50M project is turned over to the town. He went over previously mentioned areas (as far back as January) which still need to be addressed including parking areas, sidewalks, curb cuts, handicap

equipment in playgrounds, and access to playing fields which need to be completed. He also reiterated the need to address protrusions into the path of travel of people with disabilities such as water bubblers, defibrillators, and the audio visual box in the platform access section detailed in the report.

- ❖ **Fingerprinting requirement legislation** – Maddy noted that at the last meeting, Julie reported on a Townsman article which proposed that new legislation would require the caretakers, as well as family and friends of people caring for or visiting individuals with developmental disabilities, to be finger printed if the person requiring care was under 22 years of age. The finger-printing also costs the person being finger-printed \$45.

In order to clarify the intent of the law, Maddy attempted to reach Barbara L'Italien and ended up speaking to her aide about the article. The aide confirmed that the law was passed and is now in its regulatory phase -- which means the public is welcome to comment on it before it is fully implemented. The group fully understands the protection of the vulnerable in relation to hired help. Maddy and Bernadette posed the very real issue that family and friends who are involved with the care of someone up to the age of 22 must be finger-printed — surely insulting to that family and those whom they regularly invite into their home.

Action Item: ACOD will consider whether to make a written statement on the inherent unfairness of this law with respect to the very people who have previously cared for these individuals - and guests to their home.

New Business

- ❖ **Program Advertisement for Treble Chorus** – Maddy reported that although ACOD has sponsored a half page advertisement in the Treble Chorus program books for the

past two years, she recently learned from the town manager's office, that this is no longer an acceptable use of ACOD funds.

- ❖ **Proposed Logo Change** – Maddy noted that at previous meetings, there has been some discussion about advocating to change the use of the universal handicap logo to the action-orientated one adopted in a few Massachusetts municipalities. Maddy had a discussion with Jeff Dougan from the Massachusetts Office of Disability (MOD) who said that although earlier copyright issues with the designers/owners of the re-designed logo have been resolved, the Architectural Access Board has not approved it to date. This means that if used, it would be out of compliance with the ADA and AAB. Maddy further noted that MOD Director Myra Berloff is attending an upcoming ADA conference in Baltimore where the proposed logo change will be discussed. ***Action Item: ACOD agreed to await possible approval of a re-designed logo before any ACOD advocacy on the matter.***

- ❖ **“Listening” session with MAHealth 9/16/14**

Bernadette and Maddy—attended a conference in Marlborough recently on MA Health matters which for the most part involved a re-application process for all those covered (some 400,000 clients). This was caused by the purchase and failure of a computer system costing the state over a billion dollars. Discussion among ACOD members ensued about the status of applying for Mass Health to date, varying eligibility, deadlines, etc. Jennifer was able to clarify some of the issues raised due to her consulting work with health care reimbursement.

- ❖ **ID cards for the disabled** – MOD has reported to the town commissions that there have been many complaints from disabled citizens state-wide regarding the refusal to sell alcohol to people with disabilities who may not have a

driver's license. MOD seeks to reinforce the fact that the Massachusetts Identification Card is a legally authorized proof of both identity and age and should not be denied by purveyors of alcohol. To do so may result in an allegation of discriminatory treatment of people with disabilities.

Action Item: Maddy asked the ACOD to be watchful in establishments serving alcohol and to speak up if proper ID is being denied to people with disabilities by servers and the like. She will also speak with Town Clerk Larry Murphy about the materials received from MOD.

Announcements— Julie distributed some photos of the ACOD's booth at Andover Days September 6th The event and ACOD's presence was deemed a success. Members noted a public interest in transportation issues.

Adjournment

Bernadette made a motion to adjourn at 7:55 p.m., Stephen seconded. Absent a formal vote, the meeting was adjourned.

NEXT MEETING *October 22, 2014 6:30 PM_Memorial Hall Library, Activity Room, Lower Level*

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McKelliget